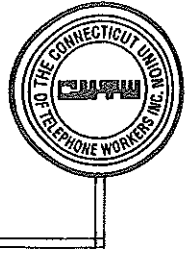


**Communications
Workers of America**

**The Connecticut Union
of
Telephone Workers, Inc.**



Local 1298
AFL-CIO

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Senator Osten, Representative Miller and Committee members
March 11, 2016

My name is William F Henderson III and I am President of the Communications Workers of America Local 1298 representing over 3400 workers the telecommunications industry. I am speaking on SB 331. I have seen my membership grow for the first time since 2002. The recent acquisition of SNET by Frontier has created several hundred new jobs. With the Governor's most recent budget cut that eliminated funding for the Office of Broadband Advocacy the message was sent loud and clear that the State does not need to spend tax payer money to create and encourage the deployment of broadband services. The private companies are well on the way based on consumer demand to do just, that which is one reason jobs are growing at Frontier.

I firmly believe and support that all Connecticut residents should have access to high-speed internet but the only economically feasible deployment is a level playing field in the private industry. The potential exists for low bidders and inferior quality by hit and run companies they may not be able to deliver the services they promise. The workers at CWA1298 have been deploying and maintaining telecommunication services for decades.

I have to ask:

Why are legislators considering spending this money at a time when we are attempting to balance the state's budget?

Why are Legislators encouraging the State and Municipalities to compete with the private sector?

My opinion is that business should take care of business and government should not interfere in the competitive market place as a broadband provider. They should remain separate. We can always anticipate problems when those lines are blurred.

Respectfully Submitted,

William F Henderson III President CWA1298